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THE STORY
OF
FRANK HARCOURT,
AND
INSTANCE OF VANITY.



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CAPTAIN Harcourt was a gentleman in the naval line, and no less beloved and esteemed for his public character, than for his private virtues: Mrs. Harcourt united a sweetness of manners to a liberality of mind, and her heart was open to the most refined impressions of friendship; it was natural for people who possessed such sentiments as these, to become peculiarly interested in the education of their children, and they had the satisfaction of beholding their three boys early manifest the most amiable turn of mind; Frank, the eldest, had lately recovered from a dangerous fit of illness, and as it was near the vacation,

his parents kept him at home until after the expiration of it.

One morning he entered the study where his father and mother were



sitting, and requested his mamma's permission to drink tea with Charles Hamilton. My dear Frank, said Mrs. Harcourt, you know I always derive pleasure from promoting your happiness, and therefore rest assured, that when I deny your request, I have substantial reasons for it; but

I really do not think Charles Hamilton a boy whose acquaintance will ever do you credit. Not credit! mamma, why Charles's papa is richer than mine, he has three carriages, and he has more money than any boy in the school; yes, Frank, I know it, continued Mrs. Harcourt, and it is from his valuing himself upon his riches, his carriages, and his father's exalted situation, that makes me think him an improper companion for you; besides, there are many traits in his character that are very unamiable, he is as mean as he is proud; and depend upon it, my dear boy, his heart is incapable of friendship: and let me intreat you never to form an intimacy with any being who you observe deficient in natural affection; recollect for a moment how very

disrespectful Charles conducts himself to his father and mother, and how over-bearing to his brothers and sisters; with what insolence of manner does he address the servants; in short, he is the last boy in the world I should wish you to form an acquaintance with, and though I do not expect to have the power of guiding your affections, yet, I flatter myself, I may be able to direct them; there is Henry Burton, a boy who possesses one of the sweetest minds and most generous hearts that ever inhabited a breast; with him, my dear fellow, I could wish you to form the strictest intimacy; a friendship with such a character as that would not only be a source of pleasure but improvement, for you would be continually witnessing some amiable

trait in his natural disposition, and as example is far more powerful than precept, you would imperceptibly copy the virtues you admired; oh mamma, said Frank, Henry and I have long been friends, and I love him very much, and think he is worth fifty Charles Hammiltons; but Charles can be very entertaining, indeed mamma; you cannot think what a good mimic he is, and how exactly he can take off his acquaintance; and can you think, Frank, replied Mrs. Harcourt, that you are without imperfections? no, certainly, mamma; but why do you ask the question? because, depend upon it, to the first person he saw after you left him, would he expose those imperfections, and all under the hypocritical appearance of being entertaining;

and thus, if your character is not injured your weaknesses would be exposed; but if he was to correct these faults, replied Frank, you would not then object to my being acquainted with him mamma? I am not apt to take prejudices, replied Mrs. Harcourt, but whenever I am convinced a character is bad I am not easily persuaded to believe it will grow better, at least when the faults proceed from the heart, and as that is my opinion of Charles Hammilton, I beg that all intercourse between you may drop; well, mamma, said Frank, you know best, and so I will think no more about this said birth-day; but he is to have a very large party, and they intend to have a great deal of fun.

I cannot promise you a great

deal of fun, but I think I can offer you some amusement, if you will go with me this afternoon and see Mr. Parkinson's museum; oh mamma, that is quite the thing, but do tell me what we are to see there? a great deal to delight an admirer of nature; but as I have never been there, I cannot give you an exact description; there are animals, vegetables, and minerals, in high perfection.

A servant now entered and told his master, that Mr. Newman wanted to speak with him; step down, Frank, said Captain Harcourt, and beg Mr. Newman will send word up what his business is, for I am very busy writing letters of consequence; papa, said Frank, when he returned, they are going to erect a new hospital, and Mr. Newman hopes you will put

your name down on this list, for there are a great many of your friends whose names are inserted; my compliments to Mr. Newman, replied Captain Harcourt, and I wish his plan success, but I shall not become a subscriber; not become a subscriber, papa! why Mr. Newman said he was sure you would, you were so very benevolent; I am obliged to Mr. Newman for his good opinion, continued Captain Harcourt, but as I have not a very large fortune, I prefer disposing of that part of it which I allot to benevolent purposes, in private, rather than in public, charities; well, but papa, said Frank, this is only two guineas, come, you had better give it to him; and with two guineas, my dear boy, I have been enabled to impart happiness to a

whole family who were in hourly expectation of being deprived the comforts of a home by a merciless landlord, to whom they were indebted that sum; so take the list down and say what I desired. John again came up stairs to inform his master that a sailor of the name of Wilmot begged to see him. I do not recollect his name, said Captain Harcourt, but let him come up, John.

A young looking man, with a countenance expressive of the honesty of his heart, now entered the room,



with a servant.—Your honour, mayhap you have forgot Joe Wilmot; oh no, my honest friend, replied the Captain, and I recollect that I never had a better seaman serve under me; but where have you been these three years? Please your honour, said Wilmot, I have been going down in the world ever since I left your honour's ship; first I went to the West-Indies, and there I caught the fever, and had liked to have tipped the bucket, then coming home, I fell from the top-mast and broke my thigh, and when I was able to go on shore and had got my wages, then a jackanapes of a fellow, who called himself a sailor (though please your honour I do not believe it) told me a sad story with such a smooth tongue, that my heart ached for him, so I offered him half my birth; but the first

night the dog came, he stole my bag that I kept my money in, and I have never been able to hear of him since; but the worst is, I now owe my landlady five and twenty shillings, and that is worse than all the rest, for please your honour, I never was in debt in my life before, and this woman's rating at me all day long, with a voice louder than a boatswain's whistle; but the long and the short of my coming here is, that I hear your honour's got a ship, and I should be glad to serve you. Why, my brave fellow, you have been going down in the world, indeed; however, we must contrive to set you aloft again: and first of all there is something to still the clamour of your landlady's tongue, said Captain Harcourt, laying two guineas upon

the table ; and as to my ship, you may enter on board her as soon as you please. God for ever bless your honour, and all that belongs to you, said the poor fellow, with an expression of gratitude in the tone of his voice more forcible than language ; and as to you, madam, said he, turning to Mrs. Harcourt, I shall never forget your kindness to my poor dear mother ; poor soul, she used to say you did her more good than all the doctor's stuff, and I would work by night and by day to serve you. Thank you kindly, Wilmot, for your good intention towards me, said Mrs. Harcourt, with a smile of ineffable sweetness ; and suppose you go down into the kitchen and see some of your old friends, and tell them I desire they will make you welcome.

'That man's conduct to his poor mother, my dear Frank, said Mrs. Harcourt, as he left the room, was a pattern to those in much more exalted situations; when she was ill he took a lodging for her close to the place where his ship was situated, and every moment that he could be absent from his duty on board, he spent by the side of her bed; he never drank his allowance of liquor, but let it remain until there became a gallon due to him, which he then sold, and carried the produce to her, and his wages he disposed of in the same manner; and when she died his unfeigned grief was really distressing; and yet much as I should have wished to serve this poor fellow, said Captain Harcourt, had I subscribed this morning to the hospital, I should

not have thought it right to have done it; and why not, papa? replied Frank. Because, continued his father, if my benevolence is not restrained within the bounds of prudence, I should reduce myself to a level with those I wish to relieve; well, papa, but you could have taken him on board your ship; yes, my dear boy, I could most certainly have done him that act of kindness, but he would still have felt oppressed with this debt to his landlady; but I would have you remember, that acts of kindness are continually coming within the ability of every man, though real benefits we but seldom have the power of bestowing.

Pray mamma, said Frank, what time shall we go to Mr. Parkinson's? we will dine early and go im-

mediately afterwards. One of our boys, continued Frank, told me there were several of the things in the museum that Captain Cook brought from Otaheite with him: perhaps, mamma, the elephant came from thence; no, replied Mrs. Harcourt, the only animals they have are hogs and dogs; they must soon be tired of pork, then, said Frank; oh, but they have poultry, fish, and wild fowl; potatoes, yams, fruit, and vegetables, cocoa nuts, and the bread tree, in great perfection, so you find they are not very badly off. I wonder, mamma, said Frank, why Omiah could not be happy in this country? for a reason, my dear boy, that did honour to his affectionate feelings; he had left behind him a father, brothers, wives, and children,

and all the gratifications we could offer him were insipid when he reflected upon the delight he had enjoyed with these tender connexions! Wives, mamma! why had he more than one? yes, such is the custom of that country, and Omiah, though a very young man, had several; well, returned Frank, when I marry, one will satisfy me, but I intend to love her with all my heart. Love her, Frank, said Captain Harcourt, as well as I do mine, and she will not have reason to complain of your want of affection; yes, papa, said Frank, I think you set me a very good example; but I wish dinner was ready, for I am very impatient to be gone, mamma. At this moment the servant announced it to be on the table; as soon as

it was over, the coach was ordered, and they drove to the museum. Frank was so delighted with all that he saw, that he intreated his mamma to promise that he should devote a whole day to the inspection of it.

RIDICULOUS INSTANCE

OF

VANITY.

M. C——, a very excellent French musician, and a man of elegant appearance and fashionable manners, marred all his good qualities, by an excess of vanity and ostentation. Not content with aspiring to the honours

of a gentleman, he assumed the rank of a nobleman. He drove a carriage, drawn by two miserable half-starved horses, and a valet was stuck behind in effigy, and made of straw! Being at a public place with this vehicle and attendant, and the carriages, as usual, following one another with a slow pace, the horses of the carriage behind that of M. C—— ate up the leg of his



valet. On seeing this, a person called out, "Take care, coachman, or your horses will devour my lord's footman."

THE END.

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